

WEIRD!

FANTASTIC!

ASTOUNDING!

BAFFLING

NOV. 10c 

MYSTERIES



COME FORWARD, MAN
OF THE OUTER WORLD! YOU
SHALL LEARN THE SECRETS
OF THE GOAT PEOPLE!

'The bonds William and I bought for our country's defense helped build a house for us!'

HOW U. S. SAVINGS BONDS PAID OFF
FOR MRS. ROSE NYSEN OF BRISTOL, PA.

"There's nothing more wonderful than a home
and garden of your own," says Mrs. Nyse,.
"and no surer way to own one than to save for it
through U. S. Savings Bonds and the
safe, sure Payroll Savings Plan!"



Mrs. Rose Nyse says,
"In 1947 William and I
started buying U. S.
Savings Bonds, a part
of our plan for the future.
Recently I joined the
Payroll Savings Plan
at the Post Office here.
On where I work, and
begin buying a \$100
bond a month, keeping
any money I have and
working for me. U. S.
Savings Bonds certainly
make saving easier!"



"Savings Bonds alone
make a \$10,000 down
payment on a home!"
says Mrs. Nyse. "Al-
though, we've saved
\$10,000 just in bonds
bought through Payroll
Savings, and we are
keeping right on. When
we retire, our bonds will
make the difference in
living comfort, and just
getting by. Bonds offer
a pension and good
old fashioned security."



You can do what the Nyses are doing —the time to start is now!

Maybe you aren't saving quite as much as William and Rose Nyse; maybe you can never more. But the important thing is to start now! It only takes three simple steps:

1. Make the big decision—to put saving first—before you even draw your pay.
2. Decide to save a regular amount systematically, week after week, at month after month. Even small sums, saved on a systematic basis, become a large sum in an amazingly short time.
3. Start saving by signing up today in the Payroll Savings Plan where you work.

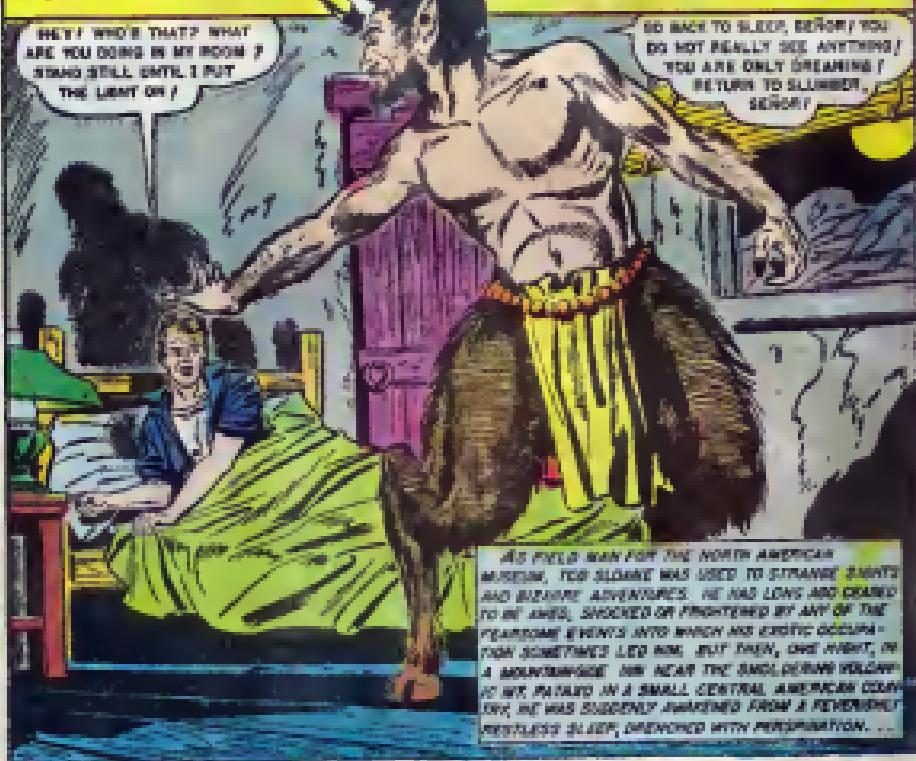
You'll be providing security not only for yourself and your family, but for the honored free way of life that's so very important to every American.

**FOR YOUR SECURITY, AND YOUR
COUNTRY'S TOO, SAVE NOW—
THROUGH REGULAR PURCHASE OF
U. S. SAVINGS BONDS!**



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VOLCANO of VENGEANCE



THE SILENTLY STILLNESS OF THE MOUNTAIN NIGHT, THE HYPNOTIC TONE OF THE NIGHTMARE INTRODUCED FOR A MOMENT MADE TED SLOANE INCAPABLE OF MOVEMENT. WHEN HE FINALLY LEAPED FROM THE BED...



VANISHED! ONE THERE'S CLIFFS—NO HUMAN BEINGS COULD SCALE THOSE SHEER, THOUSAND-FOOT PRECIPICES TO REACH THIS WINDOW! WHERE? THAT SLOW DOWN THE CRATER OF MT. PATRICK? THAT VOLCANO HAS BEEN EXTINCT FOR CENTURIES! BUT TONIGHT IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S READY TO ERUPT!



TURNING BACK INTO HIS ROOM, STILL LIGHT-HEADED, DAILEY FROWNED. PYRAMID AND Sudden ANXIETY, TOO FRIGHTENED...

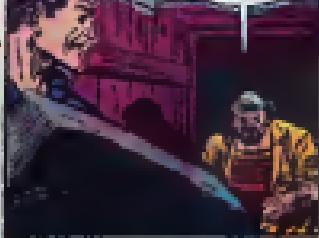
A SLICE OF LAW
FRESH THE VOLCANO! IT - IT WAS
NOT HERE WHEN I WENT TO BED!
THAT BOATHMAN MUST HAVE
LEFT IT!



THE SOLE
PURPOSE OF
TOD SLOCANE'S
TRIP TO THE
MOUNTAIN COUNTRY WAS TO INVESTIGATE REPORTS OF SHARDS
OF LAW BEING FOUND BECAUSE THE
IMPRINT OF THE FIGURE OF A MYSTICAL
BOATHMAN AND IF POSSIBLE, TO SECURE A SAMPLE FOR THE MUSEUM.
FOR THREE TREASURABLE WEEKS HE HAD EXPLORED THE AREA AND
FOUND NO SIGN OF THE REPORT BEFORE
THE TIME. NOW, THE NIGHT BEFORE
HE WAS TO RETURN TO CIVILIZATION,
THE OBSTACLE OF HIS DREAM HAS MYSTERIOUSLY BROUGHT TO HIM!

BUT BEFORE HIS DREAM COMPLETELY AND
EXAMINATION OF THE MYSTERIOUSLY-IMPRI-
NTED SLAB LEFT ON HIS DRESSER...

REBES...
THE IRON-
KEEPER?
TRANSLATE SO I KNOW
THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED
THE SECRET OF MT. PA-
TANO, YOU SHALL BURGLAY
ME, AND ALL OF US IN
THE VILLAGE WITH
YOU!



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT? THEY'RE BURGLAY
FROM THAT HUNK OF LAW/
THAT'S VALUABLE!



THERE IS STILL A
CHANCE THAT IT ISN'T
THE BOATHMAN'S BRAVE
STONE AWAY FROM...
YOU, WELL, BE CAREFUL!

ROB FOLLOWED THE MYSTICAL IRON-KEEPER TO THE JEWELRY.

SHOULD IT BE DESTROYED? I
HAVE TAKEN STEP NUMBER ONE
TO SAVE THE VILLAGE FROM THE
FURY OF THE BOATHMAN - BORIS!

WHAT PRECIOUS CHARM
OF IMPRINTED LAW
PULVERIZED! YOU
SUPERSTITIOUS IDOT,
WHY DID YOU DO
THAT?



I AWAKENED A WHILE AGO BURNING WITH
FEVER AND I KNEW THAT THE BOATHMAN OF MT.
PATANO HAD BEEN AWAKENED AND THAT THE GREAT
FIRES INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN WERE STARTING TO
ROLL OVER. IT WAS YOU WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE!



SEE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE! THE VOLCANO ERUPTS
WITH THE FIERY FURY OF THE BOATHMAN! LIQUID FIRE WILL
ROLL DOWN THE MOUNTAIN AND DESTROY THE VILLAGE
UNLESS THEY ARE APPRAISED!



WHEN ONE OF THE SACRED GOATMEN WHO LIVE IN THE FLAMING DEPTHS OF THE VOLCANO DIES, HIS FORM IS OUTLINED ON A GRANITE STORE OF LAVA! IF IT FAILS INTO THE HANDS OF AN UNBELIEVER, THE GOATMEN'S ANGER CAUSES THE FIRE TO OVERFLOW THE MOUNTAIN!

BUT IF WE CAN MAKE A SACRIFICE TO THE VOLCANO GODS IN TIME, OUR DESTRUCTION BY FIRE MAY BE STOPPED!

AS HE SANK TO THE FLOOR, CHOKING, TWO SLOWS HE ADDDED TO GO FLOATING OFF IN A PURPLE FIRE. THE THROB AND POUND OF A MILLION FORKS FILLED HIS EARS AND SWELLED TO A DEAFENING RUMBLE OF SOUND.

SUDDENLY TOO AWAKENED, AND FOUND HIMSELF TRAPPED AND SWUNG FROM A POLE LIKE A SHOOTING-IRON!

OOOOOH, MY HEAD / MUST HAVE BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR SOME TIME. WHAT ARE THEY DOING WITH ME? I'VE BEEN MILES FROM THE VILLAGE!

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME, PEDRO? YOU AND YOUR WHOLE VILLAGE WILL BE IN A MESS IF THE GOD CONSULATES COMES LOOKING FOR ME!

NO MORE SO THAN IF WE ARE DESTROYED, BOY! IN MOLTEN LAVA TO SATISFY THE RAGE OF THE GOATMEN!

WE ENTER THE CATHEDRAL CAVE OF THE GOATMEN! I HOPE YOU WILL BE SACRIFICED IN TIME TO PREVENT THE FINAL BURST OF FLAME FROM HIT, PEDRO!

DEEP INSIDE THE CAVE, AS PEDRO AND HIS PANICKED FOLLOWERS HURRY ABOUT TO HURL THEMSELVES AS A HUMAN SACRIFICE INTO A PIT OF FLAME . . .

OH, GOATMEN! REPAIR US FOR THIS HUMAN SACRIFICE BY CALMING THE FLAMES AND OF ME, PEDRO!

THAT FIGURE OF A WOMAN IN THE FLAMES / YET NONE OF THE OTHERS SEEM TO HEAR OR SEE HER / AM I SOME CRAZY?

WITH THE BURNING SERPENTS OF THE MOUNTAIN-WHEN RISING IN HIS EARS, TOO BLINDLY HURLED OUT INTO EMPTY SPACE AT THE FIRST BLAST OF VIOLENT HEAT, HEROFOOL BLACKNESS SLEPT OVER HIM.

THE SOOTY CAME SWIRLING UP OUT OF THE GLOOM OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS TO FIND HIMSELF IN AN ECHOING UNDERGROUND CHAMBER, BLOWING WITH A FLAME-LIKE LIGHT...

THE EARTH-MAN IS ALIVE, QUEEN ARM!

YES! FOR A MOMENT I WAS AFRAID WE HADN'T SAVED HIM FROM THE FLAME-PITS IN TIME!



WHERE AM I? HOW CAN I POSSIBLY BE ALIVE? NOBODY COULD HAVE LIVED THROUGH THAT HORROR.

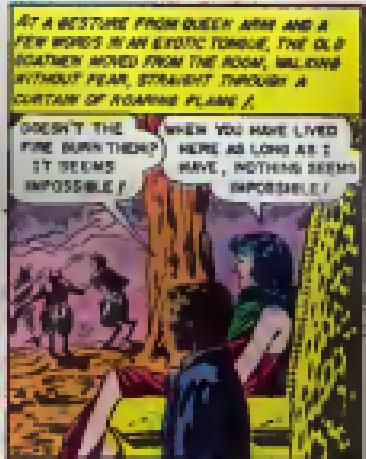
NOT WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE BOAT-PROPHET. HERE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE VOLCANO, WE CAN CONTROL THE POWER OF FIRE!

WHO ARE YOU? YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE OF THE BOAT-PEOPLES?

MY NAME IS APRIL, QUEEN OF THE BOATMEN. AFTER I DESTROYED MY COUSIN'S, I'LL TELL YOU AN INTRODUCING STORY!

AT A WISDOM FROM QUEEN ARM AND A FEW WORDS IN AN ENIGMATIC TONGUE, THE OLD BOATMAN WOKE FROM THE ROOM, WALKING WITHOUT FEAR, STRAIGHT THROUGH A CURTAIN OF ROARING FLAMES!

DIDN'T THE WHEN YOU HAVE LIVED FIRE BURN THOU? HERE AS LONG AS I HAVE, NOTHING SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE!



I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, TOO SLOWANE... I KNEW ALL ABOUT YOU FROM THE MOMENT YOU ARRIVED IN THIS WILD COUNTRY! TONIGHT I SENT ONE OF MY SUBJECTS TO BRING YOU THE BOATMAN'S GRAVESTONE, FOR WHICH YOU WERE SEARCHING, AND TO HAVE HIM ASK A FAVOR OF YOU IN RETURN. BUT MY MESSENDER BECAME TOO FRIGHTENED WHEN YOU ARRIVED SUDDENLY AND DIDN'T STOP TO GIVE YOU THIS MESSAGE!



ONCE, HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, I LIVED IN PEOPLES' VILLAGE! I, TOO, WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE OFFENDED THE BOATMEN... CAUSED THE VOLCANO TO ERUPT, AND WAS SACRIFICED IN THE SAME MANNER THAT YOU WERE, TONIGHT!



BUT YOU WERE SAVED!

HERE THE GOATMEN SEEMED ENTRANCED BY ME AND MADE ME THEIR CHEER / DURING MY REIGN THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER HUMAN SACRIFICES OF Helpless VILLAGEERS OVER WHICH I HAD NO CONTROL! THESE MUST BE STOPPED!

THEN THE VILLAGEERS' BELIEF ABOUT THE GOATMEN'S ANGER IS ONLY A SUPERSTITION?

OF COURSE / WHEN THE GOATMEN DIE AND THEIR FORM IS IMPRESSED UPON A SLAB OF MOLTEN LAVA, IT IS A mere FUNERAL RITE. AFTER IT IS DONE, NO ONE REALLY CARES WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GRAVETECHNIQUE. COME, I WILL SHOW YOU...

HEY! WE'RE NOT GOING TO TRY TO WALK THROUGH THAT HELL OF FIRE, ARE WE?

QUEEN ANN LAUGHED OFF TOO'S FEAR AS THEY HEARD THE FIRE-HALL, EXPLODING MEAT BLASTED AT THEM / SO, APPARENTLY, THEY WERE NOT BURNED.

FIRE IS THE GOAT-PEOPLES FRIEND AND CANNOT HURT THEM / AND TEMPORARILY YOU ARE ONE OF US, TOO. THIS IS THE FIRE-HALL.

IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE,

THROUGH THE FIRE-GUARDIAN THEY ENTERED A CHAMBER, FILLED WITH A STRANGELY BUZZING INCENSE-LIKE SCENT. QUEEN ANN'S VOICE LOWDORED TO AN AXED WHISPER...

THIS IS THE VAULT OF THE DEAD / ALL GOATMEN WHEN THEY DIE, ARE BROUGHT HERE, THEIR BODIES PLACED ON PIECES OF MOLTEN LAVA, AND WHILE THE IMPRESSION IS BEING MADE, THEY ARE REINCARNATED ONCE AGAIN INTO MOUNTAIN GOATS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!



THE SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HARRY VILLAGEERS AND THEIR SACRIFICES ARE ALL FOR NOTHING / THAT IS WHY YOU MUST STOP THEM, TOO SLOWME!

BUT HOW? HOW COULD I POSSIBLY RETURN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD AFTER THIS?

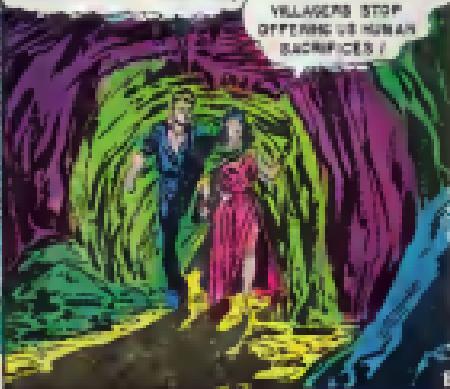


YOU SHALL SEE. HERE IS JAR-THE-WISE, WHO DIED JUST A FEW MINUTES BEFORE YOU ARRIVED! HE WAS ONE OF THE CLOSEST AND MOST BRILLIANT OF MY SUBJECTS. SOME OF THE OTHERS USED TO TEASE HIM ABOUT HIS BROKEN HORN BUT HE WAS ONE OF THE REALLY GREAT GOATMEN!



THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! AT ANY MOMENT, I'LL AWAKE FROM THIS STRANGE DREAM!

COME! I'LL SHOW YOU A WAY OF ESCAPE! YOU MUST MAKE THE VILLAGEERS STOP OFFERING US HUMAN SACRIFICES!

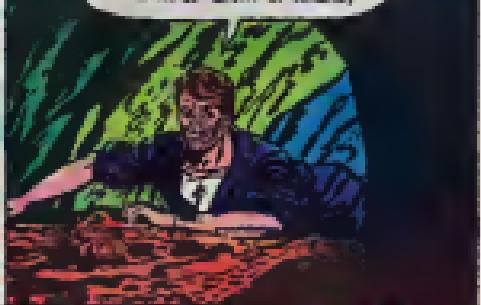


THIS IS THE SECRET EXIT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, USED BY THE REINCARNATED FORMS OF THE SORROWS I FOLLOW IT! I DON'T FORGET WHAT I TOLD YOU: GOOD-BYE, TOO SLOWME!



AS YOU ENTERED THE TUNNEL, WE LOOKED BACK, BUT SORRY AMI WAS BORN. THERE WAS NOTHING BACK THERE BUT A WALL OF FIRE COVERING THE OPENING THROUGH WHICH HE HAD CRAWLED. AFTER WHAT SEEMED HOURS OF SUPPORTING THROATEN THE SECRET LIGHT OF THE TUNNEL...

I SMELL FRESH AIR AND THERE'S A SIGN OF LIGHT UP AHEAD!



AT LAST, THE TUNNEL BROUGHT ME TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! AND ANY EXIT IS ALSO AN ENTRANCE. I'LL NOTE WHERE IT IS AND SOMEONE DRIVE BACK AN EXPEDITION TO GO INTO THE MOUNTAIN AND EXPLORE THOSE UNDERGROUND CAVERNS!



BUT AS YOU WHEELED AWAY TO FIND THE TUNNEL EXIT...

SORRY! THERE ISN'T ANY TUNNEL NOW! IT WAS RIGHT HERE A MOMENT AGO! I HAVEN'T MOVED FROM THE SPOT!



MANY YEARS LATER, STANDING IN THE DUNGEON, TOO SLOWME RETURNED TO THE AM...

SORRY, SLOWME! BUT IT CAN'T HELP ME, MYSELF, HELPED THROW HIM INTO THE FIERY BOWELS OF THE VOLCANO!

NO ONE COULD SURVIVE SUCH A FATE! IT MUST BE A SHOT!

IT'S NO, ALL RIGHT, FRIEND, ALIVE AND BREATHING! AND WITH NEWS FOR YOU!



BY SOME STRANGE HE WAS NOT BURNED TO ASHES IN THE VOLCANIC FLAMES?

LISTEN CLOSELY TO WHAT I HAVE TO TELL YOU...



PERRY AND THE OTHER AGED VILLAGERS LISTENED BAN-
MONITED AS TOO SLOWME REPORTED ALL THAT HIS PRE-
PARED TO HIM AND SAID THEIR OWN AMI'S MESSAGE...

AND NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'M EXHAUSTED. I'M
GOING UPSTAIRS AND SLEEP FOR ABOUT FORTY YEARS!

IT SHALL BE AS
YOU AND THE CHILD
SAY, SORRY SLOWME! WE
ARE CONVINCED THAT YOU
SPEAK THE TRUTH! THERE
SHALL BE NO MORE
SACRIFICES!



BACON APPEARED IN HIS ROOM...

DAN'T KEEP-EYES-OPEN-ANOTHER SECOND!
GOT TO SLEEP-SLEEP!



HOURLATER...

WHAT-WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
SOMETHING AWAKENED ME! HEY—
WHO'S THAT? I COME BACK HERE!



BLAST IT! I'VE LET HIM ESCAPE AGAIN! OR—
OR MAYBE HE—HE WASN'T EVEN REALLY THERE AT
ALL! I—I MUST'VE BEEN HALF ASLEEP,
DREAMING THINGS!



BUT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE—SOMETHING!
THIS POOF PRINT PROVES IT! AND MR. PATANO IS QUASI
ABSENT BUT STILL, NONE OF THAT OTHER COULD HAVE
HAPPENED, REALLY! THAT PART OF IT MUST HAVE
BEEN A DREAM!



BUT AS HE TURNED FROM THE MIRROR, THERE
BY THE DRESSER, HE SAID...

ANOTHER ONE OF THE GOATMAN'S
GRAVESTONES, JUST LIKE THE ONE PEDRO
DESTROYED! QUEEN ANN HAS SENT ME
ANOTHER ONE TO TAKE BACK TO THE
MUSEUM!



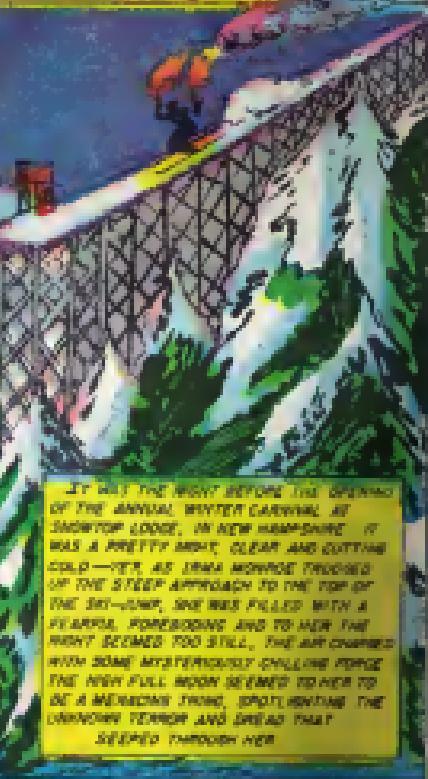
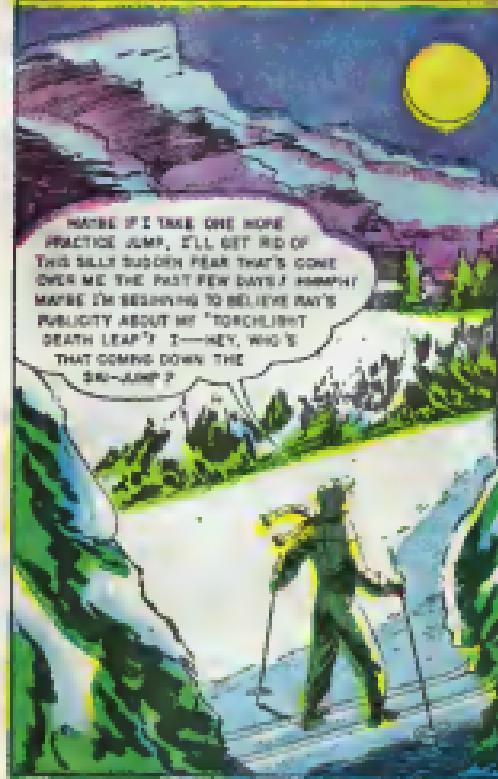
AND ON THIS BROKEN CHANT OF SOL-
COLDED ANN, CLEARLY SEPARATE, WAS THE
FIGURE OF ANN—THE—WIFE, WHO HAD
BEEN BAKED IN THE FLESH HEART OF THE
VOLCANO.

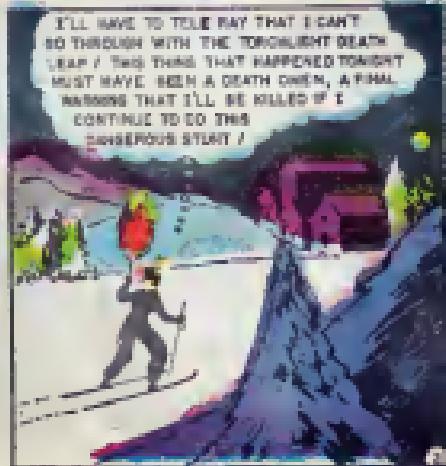
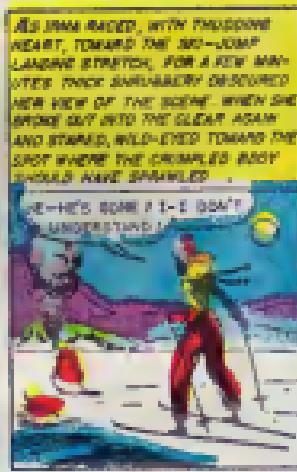
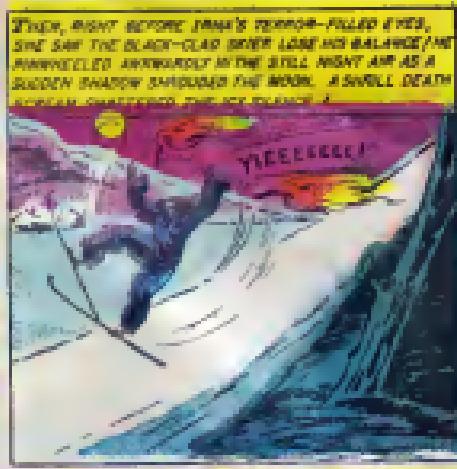
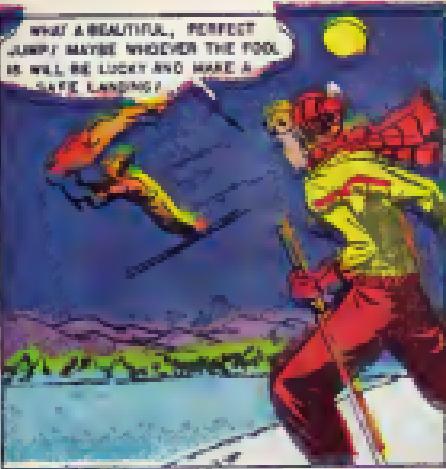
THIS PROVES THAT IT
ALL REALLY HAPPENED! I WAS WITHIN
THE VOLCANO! AND YET...



IMMEDIATELY,
TOO BLINDFOLDED HIS EYES, EXCLUDING THE GOAT-
MAN'S GRAVESTONE,
HE LEFT THE AIR
TO RETURN HOME,
WONDERING HOW
HE COULD POSSIBLY EXPLAIN TO
THE OTHERS THE THINGS THAT HAD
HAPPENED TO HIM,
AND WONDERING
THAT HE NEVER
COULD REALLY
EXPLAIN THEM!

The Phantom Snow Queen







FOR A FEW MINUTES, THE FEAR-TORN TURNED DINA MADE UP HER MIND. SHE WOULD GO TO NEW YORK, CONSULT HER UNCLE, A NOTED PSYCHIATRIST. HE WOULD HELP HER...

BUT AS DINA OPENED THE DOOR AND STEPPED OUT INTO THE SNOW-SHIRT NIGHT, A DRAFT CAME UP HER NECK AND TOSSED IT INTO THE LOG FIRE...

THE NEXT MORNING WHEN MARY MONROE FOUND HER WIFE GONE, HE SEARCHED FOR HER, PANIC-STRIKEN.

I DON'T WANT WAKE RAY AND TELL HIM I'LL JUST GO AND LEAVE HIM A NOTE OF EXPLANATION!

I CAN CATCH THE THREE A.M. TRAIN FROM TOWN AND BE IN NEW YORK IN THE MORNING!

I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HER. BOBBY SHELL PROBABLY BE BACK TONIGHT FOR THE OPENING OF THE WINTER CARNIVAL. SHE WOULDN'T MISS THAT!

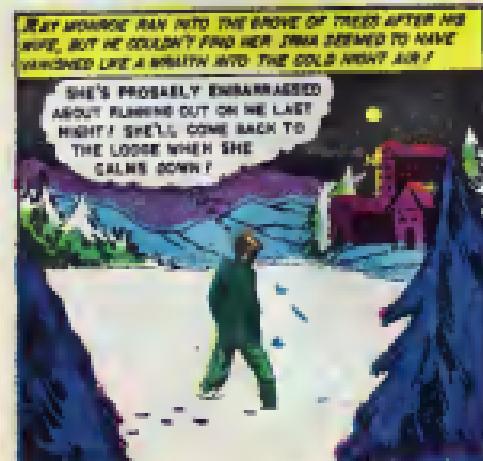


ALL THAT DAY, SPECTATORS POURED INTO SHOWTOP LOOKING FOR THE OPENING OF THE FAMOUS WINTER CARNIVAL, ATTRACTED BY THE MOST PUBLICITY EVER TO FRAMA'S FORGOTTEN DEATH LEAP, A DARING NEW STUNT. BUT THAT NIGHT...



BUT BEFORE RAY COULD MAKE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT...







CLOUDY VICTORY

I'LL MAKE SURE THIS TIME THAT I GET TO HER BEFORE SHE CAN GET AWAY! I-HHEY! LOOK OUT! SHE'S FALLING! SOMETHING'S GONE! WRONG, ERMA!



IS SHE STILL ALIVE?

YES, RAY, BUT UNCONSCIOUS AND BARELY HURTF THAT WAS A TERRIBLE FALL SHE TOOK!



ABOUT ALL WE CAN DO IS MAKE HER COMFORTABLE UNTIL THE AMBULANCE GETS HERE FROM TOWN!

OGG, WHEN WE GET INSIDE, LEAVE ME ALONE WITH HER! MAYBE IT'S TALK TO HER, IT WILL BREAK THROUGH AND HELP HER TO REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS!



ERMA! TRY TO HEAR ME! IT'S RAY, ERMA! WAKE UP! TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!



A LITTLE WHILE LATER...

IT'S NO USE! SHE DOESN'T RESPOND!

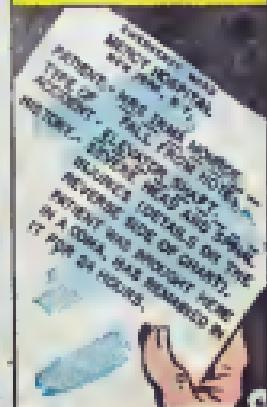


WHEN RAY AND THE OTHERS TURNED BACK INSIDE, THEY FOUND THAT ERMA HAD HAD A COUGHING FIT. THEY SEARCHED THE ROOM BUT THERE WAS NO PLACE SHE COULD BE HIDING, AND ALL WINDOWS WERE NAILED SHUT!

SHE'S GONE! HOW COULD SHE GET OUT WITHOUT US SEEING HER? I JUST TURNED MY BACK, AND NOW SHE'S GONE!



TREMBLINGLY, RAY HOLLOWECK PICKED UP A HOSPITAL HISTORY CHART AND READ...



PANICKED, CONFUSED, RAY MONROE CALLED THE HOSPITAL IN NEW YORK...

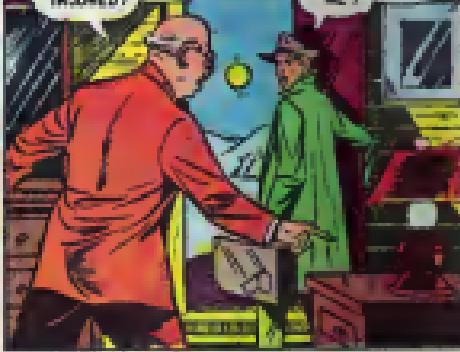
I'M SURE THERE'S NO MISTAKE, SIR! WE DO HAVE A PATIENT, ANSWERING YOUR DESCRIPTION, A MRS. ERMA MORSE, WHO WAS PLUNGED AS YOU DESCRIBED!

I-E DEEP THANK YOU!



BUT IT'S RIDICULOUS, RAY! WE ALL SAW HER TAKE THE JUMP LAST NIGHT AND TONIGHT WE CARRIED HER HERE, JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO, INJURED!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY OR THINK, I'M GOING TO NEW YORK—TO ERMA! SHE NEEDS ME!



AS HIS TRAIN DRACED THROUGH THE SILENT NIGHT, RAY MORSE FONDLED THE STRANGE AND BIZARRE HAPPENINGS THAT HAD OCCURRED TO HIM AND HIS WIFE DURING THE PAST 48 HOURS. HE TRIED BUT COULD FIND NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION FOR THEM...



THE NEXT MORNING, IN ERMA'S ROOM AT THE METROPOLITAN...

BUT YOUR WIFE COULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THOSE JUMPS! JUMPS THE LAST TWO NIGHTS SHE'S BEEN RIGHT HERE, ALL THAT TIME, UNCONSCIOUS, WITH A NURSE ALWAYS.

PRESIDENT! YOU MUST HAVE SEEN SOMEBODY ELSE!

BUT IT WAS ERMA! I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO BELIEVE OR UNDERSTAND, BUT I KNOW!



SUDDENLY, AT THE SOUND OF RAY'S VOICE, ERMA STIRRED. SHE LOOKED UP AT HER HUSBAND, SHRIEKED, AND THERE WAS AN EERIE, GHOST-LIKE SOUND TO HER VOICE AND AN OTHER-WORLD LOOK TO HER EYES...

RAY, HONEY! I KNEW YOU'D COME! HOW—HOW DO YOU LIKE THOSE JUMPS I MADE, DARLING? I DIDN'T DISAPPOINT YOU AFTER ALL, DID I?



WHY—WHY, IT'S ALMOST A MIRACLE! SHE'S RECOVERED COMPLETELY, AND NEEDS ONE HUNDRED PER CENT IMPROVEMENT!

WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT, RAY? WHAT DID I JUST SAY? I—I DON'T REMEMBER, NOW!

IT DOESN'T MATTER! FORGET IT AND GO TO SLEEP, NOW, ERMA—A NICE WOMAN SLEEP THAT WILL REST YOU UP!



HER PULSE AND RESPIRATION ARE NORMAL AGAIN, MR. MORSE! THERE'S NO QUESTION ABOUT HER RECOVERY, NOW! YOUR FRIENDS OUT ABOUT HER ACCIDENT AND GETTING HER BACK HOME IF



RAY MORSE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE STRANGE CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT MADE POSSIBLE THIS MIRACLE AND DOUBTED THAT HE EVER WOULD, BUT HE WAS GRATEFUL AND ACCEPTED THE CIRCUMSTANCES AS ONE OF THOSE STRANGE OUT-OF-THE-WORLD HAPPENINGS BEYOND THE KNOWLEDGE OF MERE MANKIND.

The Lady was a TIGER

AFFET HER--HER FACE / IT--IT'S HORRIBLE / IT'S CHANGING! YOU
MUST DO SOMETHING, DOCTOR!

WHAT KIND OF
HORROR IS
THIS, IN GOD'S NAME?

SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING TO
BONNIE, DOCTOR!



"YOU'VE PROBABLY READ A LOT ABOUT STUART AND BONNIE JACKSON, THE HUSBAND-AND-WIFE TEAM OF BIG-BEAN HUNTERS WHO BRAVE HEAVY HAIL ATTEMPTS FOR ZOOES AND CIRCUSES. BUT NOT RECENTLY. YOU'VE PROBABLY FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPENED TO HE. WELL, THIS IS THE STORY--THE WHOLE WILD AND TERRIFYING ACCOUNT OF THE WEIRD AND BIZARRE EVENTS THAT OCCURRED ON OUR LAST EXPEDITION..."

"WE HAD BEEN TRAIL-HUNTING
IN A LITTLE-
EXPLORED
SECTION OF
WESTERN
WYOM. BONNIE
WAS ACCIDENT-
ALLY SHOT BY A
COW-BEAR,
AND WE
BROUGHT
HER HERE TO
THE LOWLY
OUTPOST
HOME OF A
MYSTERIOUS
AND MYSTI-
CAL DR.
ZAKERS,
WHO BEING
BEEN
TREATED,
WHEN
THIS
HAPPENED...

STOP THOSE
FOOLISH
HYSTERICS!"

DOCTOR! SOMETHING IS HAPPENING TO
BONNIE! HER EYES ARE CHANGING AND
HER TEETH GROWING! AND HER SKIN IS
GETTING STRIPED! THIS IS HORRIBLE!"



YES, YES! THEY DO
LOOK LIKE STRIPED
TIGERS STRIPPED!
WHAT DO YOU
THINK OF THAT?
REMARKABLE!

SOMETHING MUST HAVE
COME WRONG IN THAT
TRANSFUSION YOU JUST
GAVE HER! DO SOMETHING!
STOP THIS
IMPOSSIBLE THING THAT'S
HAPPENING!



THE ZANGER'S STRANGE EYES DILATED WITH
A PARANORMAL LIGHT AND HIS SKIN ALMOST
PLEASSED BY THE GRAYISH CRACKS COMING
OVER BONNIE. I WAS CRIED WITH FEAR,
BUT AS HE EXPLAINED...

CALM DOWN! IT'S THE NIGHT AND ZERO-DAY
OF THIS STEAMING JUNGLE COUNTRY THAT
AFFECTS PATIENTS THAT WAKED AFTER A
BLOOD TRANSFUSION. NOTHING TO WORRY
ABOUT! SYMPTOMS WILL VANISH
IN A FEW HOURS.



NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE!
I--UH--HAVE SOME IMPORTANT
WORK THAT I MUST DO RIGHT
AWAY! I'LL BE BACK IN A
COUPLE OF HOURS AND
YOU'LL SEE BONNIE.
WILL BE ALL RIGHT!

I HOPE SO! I
DUREE YOU
OUGHT TO
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE
DOING!



BUT AS I LEFT THE BANDAGE, I WONDERED IF
I HAD HEARD STRANGE TALES OF THIS OLD DOCTOR
WHO HAD RECENTLY SURVIVED IN THE ROTTING
INDIAN JUNGLE TO EXTRAVAGANTLY PRACTICE MEDICINE
WHICH ONLY UNCONSCIOUSLY FILLED ME...

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT BONNIE
HERE! BUT THERE ISN'T ANOTHER DOCTOR
IN A HUNDRED MILES?



LISTEN! THE
ANGRY ROAR
OF THE
GREAT
STRIPED
ONE!

THAT'S A TERRIBLE
SCREAMING, ALL
RIGHT! I DO KNOW
THAT STRIPE
TICKLING AROUND
ANYWHERE!

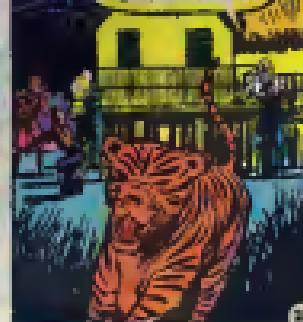


THE NEXT MOMENT THERE WAS
A PARANORMALLY HORROR SCREAM
FROM THE HOUSE! AS HE
STARTED TOWARD THE
AWFULNESS SOURCE...

THERE! TIGER WAS IN
DOCTOR'S HOUSE! IT
ESCAPES NOW!



KILL
MEISTER--
NO--SHOTS--BUT
STRIPED THEY DON'T
DEAD!
NO BETTER MAN!
COME ON! WE'D
BETTER HURRY
TO THE HOUSE!



WHAT HAPPENED? SHE--YOUR WIFE HAD A SUDDEN
DOCTOR! WHERE'S ATTACH OF JUNGLE MARIA? SHE
DONNA I DID THREW A FIT, LEAPED OUT OF
BED AND ATTACKED ME WITH
TEETH AND NAILS! WHEN I
PASSED OUT, SHE--SHE
DISAPPEARED!



BONNIE - COHER AND YOU
SO EASY RIPPED YOUR
CLOTHES AND WOUNDED
YOU LIKE THAT? THAT'S
RIDICULOUS! IT WAS
THE TIGER!

WHAT TIGER! WHAT
ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT? I SAW
NO TIGER!



FROD AND CONVOCATION SWIFT
OVER AS HE THE DOCTOR DRAGO
CROSSING THE ROOM AND FLEM INTO
A MURKIERI KARE AGAINST TRAP
MATTERS HAD BACKED UP MY STORY!

YOU WITH SUPERSTITIOUS FOOL
DON'T THANK YOU SAW A THESE! IT
WAS BONITA JACKSON IN THE
THROES OF JUNGLE MARIA, THAT
YOU CAN FLEE THROUGH THE
WINDOW! GET OUT!



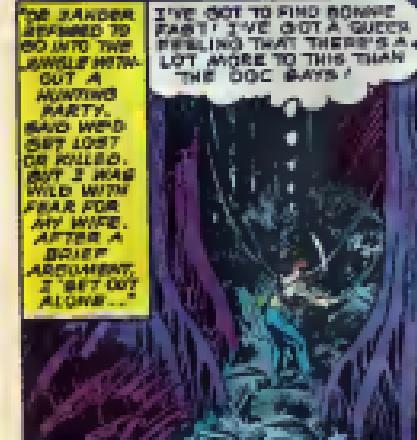
I APOLOGIZE
FOR THAT.
DISPLAY OF
TEMPER. IMAGINATION
START, BUT NOT IT'S BONNIE
WHEN THOSE I AM WORRIED
HAPPINESS ABOUT WE'VE
GOT ANY GOT TO BRING
GUEST TO HER BACK?
THINKING, IT'S
TOO MUCH



WE'LL ROUND ON THATULL
IF A HUNTING TAKE A COUPLE
OF HOURS. WHY
CAN'T YOU AND I
GO HUNTINGTON
OUR BEARERS
AND BUSH-
BEATERS, CIRCLE SOME-
WHERE, ILL
FEVERISH, IN
DANGER, WE
CAN'T WAIT!



THE JARRIER
PLANNED TO
GO INTO THE
JUNGLE WITH-
OUT A
HUNTING
PARTY,
SAID HE;
GET LOST OR KILLED,
BUT I WAS
WILD WITH
FEAR FOR
MY WIFE.
AFTER A
BRIEF
ARGUMENT,
I SET OUT
ALONE...



I'VE GOT TO FIND BONNIE
PART! I'VE GOT A SICK
FEELING THAT THERE'S A
LOT MORE TO THIS THAN
THE DOC SAYS!



MR. JACKSON! WAIT! I WANT
TALK TO YOU! I DON'T CARE
HOW THE DEVIL-DOCTOR
PUNISHED ME!

IT'S INGA, DR.
ZAROFF'S
NURSE!

"THERE IN THE SPOTLIGHT, SWIMMING JUNGLE GLADE, THE ALIVE-POW'ER AT HIS BOYISH TURNED TO ICE AS I LISTENED TO JACKIE'S FRIGHTENED SASSLINE...."

DEVIL DOCTOR LAUDS HIS WORK
HE IF HE LEADS ONE TOLD YOU
THE TRANSFIGURATION HE LIED
TIGER'S BLOOD NOT MANH
BLOOD YOUR WIFE HAS BLOOD
OF GREAT STRIPED ONS
RUNNING THROUGH HER VEINS
HE -- HE DID IT
PURPOSELY!

1000000



"I AM EXPERIMENTING WITH THE CHEMICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS' BLOOD, SO THAT WHEN INJECTED INTO VEHICLES OF HUMANS, IT WILL TURN THEM INTO BEASTS." YOUR WIFE WAS HIS FIRST MAJOR EXPERIMENT AND IT WORKED; I-2-3 SAW IT! SHE BECAME A TIGRESS!"



"YOU AND THE
OTHERS DIED
SEE A TIGER,
LEAF FROM
THE WINDY
IT WAS
MONITA!
SHE JOINED
THE OTHER
WILD
BEASTS
IN THE
JUNGLES!"

— 10 —

BUT THAT'S
AFTERNOON;
YET, SHE WAS
CHANGING -- HER
TIES, HER
BETH, THE
STRIPES
HORNING
IN HER
SKIN?



"I DON'T FEEL SURPRISED, ACCEPT THE APPROPRIATE THINGS WHICH HAD FOLDED ME. I HAD TO LEAVE THEM AND FIGHT ON THROUGH THE CLOUDS
WHICH NIGHT IN MY SEARCH FOR SOURCE."

EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND I FIND THOSE
FIERY, SATANIC EYES STARING AT ME! SOME
AWFUL BEAST IS STALKING ME!



"AT LAST THE MOONLIGHT REVEALED THE TIGER,
CROUCHED ON A LIMB. I PULLED MY ARROW,
BUT IT WOULDN'T FLY!"

BLASTED GUN JAWNECH YET THERE'S NOTHIN' WRONG WITH THE ANECHANISM! I'M COMPLETELY AT THE MERCY OF THAT GREAT CAT-- YET ALL IT DOES IS WATCH ME AND PURR !



**THE ENTHUSED A NEW CASTLE ONE;
SHOULD WORK NOW! HEY! THE
TREES COME AWAY!**



COOLED AND EXHAUSTED FROM INSIDE THROUGH THE
JEWELLE DRAUGHTER, IT FROZEN ON. RAPID SWAYS EAST
TOWARD AND WITH JEWELLE'S STEPS, MARTIN FOR HADDESS
MOVED. GALLFWING EXPERIENCE MADE
5 SWAYS TO STRIKE HEAT.—

A WATER HOLE / WHERE I'LL
FEE, BATTER, WHEN I'VE
QUENCHED MY THIRST /





"A LION! CAN'T GET THE BEAST UP IN TIME! THIS IS CURTAINS FOR ME!"

"A SINGLE BLOW FROM THAT MASSIVE PAW KNOCKED ME FLAT. THE LAST THING I SAW BEFORE HEAVEN BLACKNESS SWIFTLY OVER. AND WAS THAT CAVERNOUS JAW JAWAHED WITH THE LONG FANGS OF DEATH, COMING TOWARD ME..."



"I SPYED TWO DOZEN ANGELS, ARMED WITH SABRETTED GUNS, FILLED WITH SCREAMING, GROWLING HALF-HUMAN, HALF-BEAST CREATURES, ALL WITH THE FACE OF MY POOR SONNIE! ALL THROWN IN THE HOUSE THROU, ROLLING WITH GRIMACING LAUGHTER, WAS THE OBSCENE DR. ZANDER..."



"THEN I CAME SPINNING OUT OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS, TO FINALLY..."

A TIGER! AND IT SEEDED FRIGHTENLY! IT MUST HAVE KILLED THE LION! SAVED MY LIFE! BUT WHERE UNLESS IT—IT'S SONNIE!"



"TORCHES AND THE SOUND OF CHAOS COMING THIS WAY! WHAT NOW? HEY, TIGER! SONNIE! COME BACK! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED! I WON'T LET THEM HURT YOU!"



"I FEEL LIKE A FOOL, CALLING THA TIGER BY MY WIFE'S NAME. LET'S GO HOME. HOW HAD TO DO IT, BUT THE BEAST BOUNCED OFF. SOON I WAS JOINED BY A SEARCHING PARTY OF DR. ZANDER'S NATIVES. I TOLD THEM MY EXPERIENCE..."

"AND THAT'S ZAMANISH! NOT DEVIL-MAN, HOW IT HAPPENED? I NEVER FRIENDLY TO HUMAN! TIGER CAN'T KILL LION! ZAMA... ZAMANISH! JUST SAVE US FROM SUCH EVIL... SPIRITS!"



"THE NATIVES SEEMED TO BE CONVINCED THAT I WAS PART OF SONNIE GREAT SUPERNATURAL PLAN. AND AFTER ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED, I WAS DETERMINED TO BELIEVE IT MYSELF! THEN, WHEN WE GOT BACK TO DR. ZANDER'S PLACE..."

"HELP! DEVIL! SOME KIND OF DISTURBANCE! SOMETHING HAPPENED BACK HERE!"



DR. ZANDER, HOW TAKE IT EASY, BOSS! I'LL
INDA PRISONER. I GO IN AND SEE WHAT THIS
TRY BAD MAGIC IS ALL ABOUT I PROMISE
ON REAL DRUGS YOU INDIA WON'T
BE HURT!



NOT UNTIL YOU TELL ME, EXPLAIN EVERYTHING - ALL RIGHT! ALL THINGS - ABOUT THE WORLD WILL DO HIRE - AND SOON KNOW WHAT INDIA - AND A MIRACLE IT'S WHATEVER PERFORMED, ANY KIND OF HOW AFTER MALPRACTICE THIS EXPERIMENT PROVES UP TO? THAT WHAT I DID TO YOUR WIFE WAS NO ACCIDENT!



AS ZANDER'S FINGER MANTICLED DOWN THE TRIGGER, HIS MILLISECOND EYES AND TATTOO FEATURES TOLD ME THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY, AUTOMATICALLY MAD. THEN...



IT RUSHED INTO THE HOUSE AND BURST INTO DR. ZANDER'S SECRET ROOM, WHERE EVERYBODY WAS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER...

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, ZANDER?



YOUR WIFE HAD THE HONOR OF BEING THE FIRST SUBJECT! WHEN I GUN AWAY MADE THE TRANSFUSION, I USED AND LIKENED BLOOD TREATED WHOLE BLOOD OF A REVEL KILLED THEIR CUB."

MY THEORY HAS LONG BEEN THAT

SUCH A TRANSFUSION WOULD

TURN THE SUBJECT INTO THE

KIND OF BEAST whose BLOOD

RAN FLOWING THROUGH HIS

OR HEARTS! IT WORKED!

HOW DARE YOU INTERRUPT MY GREAT WORKS GET OUT!

PUT THAT
TO REASON!
YOU CAN'T
CONTINUE
SUCH EVIL
WORK!

HORSESHOE WHICH I

PROVE AN EXPERIMENT CONCERNING

IN TURNING INDIA

INTO A THRESS,

TOO, I WILL BE

SUCH, SAMOUS! BUT

FIRST I SHALL

DISPOSE

OF YOU!



THAT TIGER KILLED ZANDER WITH ONE SMASHING BLOW! NOW IT SEEMS TO BE PURPOSESS DESTROYING HIS BLOOD BANK!



THE BEAST IGNORED INSA AND ME AND LEFT. BUT IT WON'T ESCAPE FROM THAT SOLID HAIL OF LEAD! NOTHING COULD LIVE THROUGH THAT! YET THE BULLETS AIN'T AFFECTING IT!



"FOUR OF THE BEASTS WERE HEARD FIGHTING. TWO WERE MURDERED AND ONE WAS KILLED BY THE TIGER. I CAME TO FIND IT. SO DARE DISTANCE FROM THE HOUSE..."



NO INJURIES... OR TIRES... OR SIGN OF THE STRIPPED HOUSE! NO FOR THE ENLARGED SIGHT OF TEETH OR THE HOW HIS CATLIKE EYES! OH !



HELLO, DARLING!... 4.3. WHAT HAPPENED? I HAD THE STRANGEST ORGANISMS ON ME. WHERE THEY COME FROM?

OF COURSE, IT WAS JUST A WEIRD NIGHTMARE DONUTS! HOW COULD ANYTHING LIKE THAT REALLY HAPPEN? I FORGOT IT NOW, HONEY! LET'S NOT EVER EVEN TALK ABOUT IT AGAIN!"

"PERHAPS THAT WOULD BE BEST!"



"I WOULD FORGIVE AND FORGET COMPLETELY WITHIN A FEW DAYS AND NOT REMEMBER IT AT ALL. I NEVER WENT ON ANY OTHER EXPEDITION AGAIN, BUT THOUGH OF THE STRANGE AND UNKNOWN HAD SHAKEN ME TOO DEEPLY, SOMETIMES EVEN NOW WHEN I HEAR AN ALLEY CAT SCREECH SCREAMING IN THE GLOOMY NIGHT, I BREAK OUT IN A COOL SWEAT, AND WONDER IF IT REALLY IS A CAT I'M HEARING..."

The End

WIN CASH PRIZES!

All you have to do is write a letter of 250 words or less and tell us which story you liked best, which you liked second best and which you liked third best, and why.

1st PRIZE	• • • • •	\$15.00
2nd PRIZE	• • • • •	5.00
3rd PRIZE	• • • • •	3.00
4th PRIZE	• • • • •	2.00



Follow these rules carefully—and your letter may be a prize winner! Letters to be no longer than 250 words; give your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice of stories in the magazine; give your name, address, and age; tell us what other magazines you read regularly. The judges' decision will be final. Duplicate awards will be made in case of tie. All entries must be postmarked as late as MIDNIGHT, OCTOBER 28, 1951.

Address: Contest Editor, BAFFLING MYSTERIES, 23 W. 47th St., New York 19

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

THE DANUBE RIVER FLOWS THROUGH SMALL TOWNS IN LOWER GERMANY. AT ITS NARROW PORTS, THERE ARE FERRYBOATS TO CARRY PASSENGERS TO THE OTHER SIDE. HERE IS THE STRANGE STORY OF ONE FERRYMAN AND HIS BARGE . . .

BUSINESS WAS SLOW FOR HANS BAYER, THE BARGE MAN... SO SLOW THAT HE HAD TO KEEP HIS BARGE BOAT AT NIGHT LONG AFTER THE OTHER FERRYMAN HAD CLOSED SHOP.

LOOK AT OLD HANS! HE STAYS ALL NIGHT TO BET THE LAST FARES!

I HAVE AN IDEA, MARTIN! TOMORROW IS HALLOWEEN NIGHT! I THINK WE CAN HAVE FUN WITH OLD HANS!

WE'LL DRESS UP OURSELVES AS GHOSTS AND MAKE HANS FERRY US ACROSS THE RIVER. HE'LL BE SCARED OUT OF HIS WITS!

AGREED! I'LL MEET YOU HERE LATE TOMORROW NIGHT!



THE NEXT NIGHT THE TWO MEN, DRESSED AS GHOSTS IN WHITE ROBES, DESCENDED UPON THE OLD FERRYMAN...

AH, W-WHAT IS THIS? WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHO ARE YOU?

WE ARE DEATH! YOU ARE COMMANDED TO FERRY US ACROSS THE RIVER STYX!



THE OLD FERRYMAN DID AS HE WAS TOLD. THE GHOSTS COULD HARDLY KEEP FROM LAUGHING, BUT THE OLD MAN WAS FRIGHTENED INTO INNOCENCE...



WHEN LAST SEEN, THE BARGE WAS DRIFTING OUT INTO THE MOST-DOVECTED WATERS. A few suddenly fell over the river and into the boat from above.



THE FERRY NEVER REACHED ITS DESTINATION AND THE FERRYMAN AND HIS CARGO HAD DISAPPEARED. THE TOWNS-PEOPLE DRAINED THE RIVER FOR MILES IN SEARCH OF THE BARGE AND THE BOAT ON IT. NOT A TRACE OF THE THREE MEN ON THE BOAT HAS EVER BEEN FOUND. JUST ANOTHER STRANGE MYSTERY IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!



UNDERWATER MYSTERY

A many form materialized from the black depths. The form was a little below him, was walking, drifting slowly towards him as it ascended. It caused him to realize that this figure could rise, while he himself was compelled to descend. The figure came closer, more distended, contorted face twisted into convulsive lines of stark horror.

It was a man. Marchant remembered the steel, square face of the German who had burned by, when he had been struggling with the huge body of Zingi.

The German gazed at him dully, deathly pale. He saw that the man's eyes were closing, with a seeming finality, only the appraised, imploring arms apparently having life. The heavy bosom of the German drifted past his head; the figure disappeared.

"Lorna! Lorna, dearest! Where are you? I will come to you, if you will let me know where you are!"

He had stopped descending at last. He was resting on what apparently was the bottom of the abyssal profundity. Black, rocky mire cracked at his feet, made his laden steps even more difficult, slower. Other figures wandered dully around him on the filthy, stinking bottom. They were groping, searching . . .

"Lorna! Lorna, where are—"

He saw her. She seemed miles away, her vague figure merging dimly with the black mists. Yet he could see her face, a white blotch that drifted closer and closer.

Maggishly, with muddling deliberation, his feet carried him towards her. He could see another figure, a large, distorted figure bearing down upon the girl from above. It was Zingi.

The hideous man was nearing the girl, descending upon her with greater speed than Marchant could manage with his lagging legs.

Lorna held out her arms, her terrified eyes beseeching him to hurry, even as she endeavored to move to him. He cursed his deadened legs and their maddening sluggish motions, tried to run, and found that he could move no faster.

"Lorna! Lorna, darling, run to me! Beloved, there is some one trying to come near you. From above. Look above you!"

As though she were unaware that Marchant was shouting to her, warning her, Lorna called to him.

"John, dear! Come to me, please. Harry, John, *he* is coming!"

Marchant felt the uncanny thrill of her voice in his brain. He knew that he had not heard Lorna call, something in his mind had telegraphed him she was pleading with him.

"Lorna, darling! I'm coming as fast as I can!"

But he knew he could not hope to reach her before the black, sinister form of Zingi would descend upon her. Even as he watched, the hulking man reached out, his huge arms encircling Lorna's waist, pulling her to him. The diabolical face was twisted in a terrible expression, as it pressed near Lorna's white face.

The girl and the clutching monster were locked for a moment, struggling with lethargic, sluggish movements. Lorna succeeded in pulling away from his grasp. Zingi reached out, caught her again.

Zingi's arms locked their fingers convulsively in a death grip about her slender neck throat. The fingers tightened. Lorna's head was forced back, a horrible expression of pain and fear etching across her white face. The huge devil kept on choking, choking. . . .

A black mass of futile rage swam before Marchant's blotted eyes, a dull roaring of his own brain pounding in his ears. If only he could make his leaden legs move faster. . . .

It was too late now. Lorna lay limply on the sucking mire of the bottom. The hand was bending over her, staring at her. . . . The black mass clouded Marchant's vision again. Rage and frustration clamped at a vice about him.

The mist cleared, and he saw the ghastly form of the monster coming toward him, the fat black and disengaged with a bitter rage. His fingers were extended, clutching towards Marchant. Marchant moved as fast as he could to meet him, horror and revenge stirring his half-mad brain.

Lorna! Where was she? He gazed about as he moved. Shapes, grotesque and horrible, still drifted aimlessly about him, above him. But Lorna had gone. She had disappeared. A moment ago—or was it a century?—she had been on her knees, then on her back, her white throat in the grasp of the ghastly Zingi. Now she had been snatched away, was nowhere. Had Zingi killed her, had she, in death, disseminated nothing?

A murderous fury consumed Marchant as he suddenly closed with the horrid specter of Zingi. This man had killed Lorna! Had brutally throttled her white, delicate throat. . . .

At first his rage lent him strength, and he seemed to overpower the malicious, inhuman thing with which he was fighting. But Zingi's muscular force soon wore him down. He was suddenly fighting a hopeless, losing battle for what remained of his life.

He felt himself, still struggling weakly, sink into the slimy mire at his feet. Gasping, he tore feebly at the hands about his windpipe, tried to loosen them,

The fingers remained incredibly firm, with a grip of a maniac. Then blackness slowly stole over him. He felt his body relax, go limp at his back, sagged into the cruse.

"Lorna, Lorna! Darling—I'm dying. I will be—with you—beloved."

He lay perfectly still.

He was vaguely aware that there were no hands about his throat. He seemed to be floating through time and space. He was ascending. His above, he could see the gleamer of light. It appeared a little stronger. If he were dead, and drifting toward Elysium, then he would soon be with Lorna.

His head and lungs were suddenly splitting, as though they had been a long time deprived of air. He could drag no air into his straining body.

His eyes opened, became accustomed to the light. The first thing he saw was the beloved face of Lorna. He gaped her name, heard her murmur his. Her features were distorted at first in fear, but as he moved, she broke into a timid, relieved smile, pressed her wet face against his, sobbed:

"John! John! Thank heaven!"

A man's heavy, uniformed body was crawling off Merchant's clinging chest and stomach. The man, he realized, was a member of the *Arandora's* crew, and had been working over him, pumping life-giving air into his lungs by means of artificial respiration.

"You're okay now, buddy," the sailor motticed. "And you're lucky."

Merchant looked about him. He was in one of the large lifeboats of the *Arandora*. There were six or seven seamen in the boat. The others, some fifteen or so, were, like himself and Lorna, passengers on the *Arandora*. They were huddled together under blankets trying to warm their wet, chilled bodies. The sailors were pulling at long oars, moving the boat in and out of the debris and wreckage which floated about on the surface of the oily water. From time to time the boat stopped and the crew fished exhausted human beings out of the water.

One of the bodies found near, soon drowning slightly. Merchant saw when the crew had helped the man into the boat, that it was the splattered German—half drowned, gasping helplessly as he sucked air into his burning lungs.

Merchant turned to Lorna, pressed her cold cheek against his, kissed her.

"Thank heaven you're all right," he breathed.

He could see no sign of the *Arandora*, the huge passenger liner open which he and Lorna had been returning from a tour of Europe. Nothing but an oily, turbulent surface remained where the big ship had been. He saw distantly the skyline of New York's Lower Manhattan. There were the buildings he had been so glad to see again. They were almost within sight of the harbor. He saw tugboats and fire-boats steaming toward them, their stems blasting.

"The *Arandora* sank?" he asked in a low voice. Lorna nodded.

"Yes. One of the engine rooms caught on fire. The heating burst, blowing holes through the bottoms of the ship. She went down almost at once. Only a few of us were saved."

Merchant remembered the ominous trembling of the polished teak deck; it should have warned him that something was wrong. Then the terrific roar coming through the bulkheads and a ventilator—he had ignored that also, until too late. The explosion—that had been one of the boilers going. The flash of fire, and the sharp blow on his head when he had been hustled against the suddenly slanting deck rail. It all came back to him now, vividly, rapidly. He had been unconscious—had been—but had probably to the bottom of the river along with most of the other passengers. Lorna had gone down too, had risen to the surface before him, after struggling weakly.

He started as he gazed upon Lorna's throat. The skin where flesh was horribly inflamed, there were ugly, livid welts—singer marks.

"Lorna!" he rasped. "That man! Zinzi! Thatinhornas beast who talked about doomsday, just before we went down? Your throat? Who was he?"

The sailor who had worked over him, said:

"Yeah, buddy, your gal friend asked about him, too. That guy was a nut. We've taken him aside before. Some kind of foreigner who went around preaching about how the day of judgment's always coming. He just happened to be speaking it to you when the boats busted and took it again. He went down, too."

"But his throat—the marks?"

"Yeah," the sailor said. "Your own neck's scratched up worse, too. This guy was drowning. A drowning man who can't swim will grab anything he can get his hands on. First clothes, then neckstrangler. When he grabbed your neck and the young lady's, it practically knocked you both out, I guess. When you lay still, you sank—and when you sank you wasn't no more help to the drowning' guy. He lit go. He got onto somebody else, and they both came up eventually. If you twist your head, you can see what happened to that nut."

Merchant looked at the body floating near the boat. It was the body of Zinzi. The ghastly, leering face was purple and bloated in death. Merchant turned his head away, a little sick. He held both Lorna's small hands tightly in his.

The sailor looked grimly at Merchant, said:

"You gal friend and I thought you was never coming up. It must taken you ninety strands."

Merchant looked into Lorna's eyes, drew her closer to him.

"No," he said slowly. "It took ninety years."

THE END

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

THE BURIED TREASURE OF CAPTAIN KODD, THE NOTORIOUS PIRATE, HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MANY TALES AND LEGENDS. SOME ARE TRUE BUT MOST ARE THE CREATIONS FROM THE FERTILE MINDS OF AUTHORS. THIS FOLLOWING STORY IS TAKEN FROM THE FILES OF POLICE RECORDS IN A FLORIDA COASTAL TOWN . . .

IN THE SUMMER OF 1927, MATTHEW BOWER WANDERED ON A DESERTED BEACH. SUDDENLY HE SPYED A HALF-BURIED SWORD IN THE SAND.

HUH, THAT CUTLASS LOOKS LIKE ONE USED BY THE OLD PIRATES!



AS BOWER TOOK THE SWORD, HE FELT IT SCRAPE METAL HIDDEN IN THE SAND. HE EXCITEDLY BURIED DUNNO, UNTIL . . .

AN OLD PIRATE CHEST / GOLD! I'VE FOUND PIRATE GOLD!



BOWER WAS ALMOST MAD WITH DELIGHT AT HIS DISCOVERY AS HE PUT A HANDFUL OF GOLD INTO HIS POCKET. HE GLANCED UP . . .

WHO'S CAPTAIN KODD?



ABOVE HIM STARED THE GIGANTIC FIGURE OF THE FAMOUS PIRATE, CAPTAIN KODD!

IT'S MONEY I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I LET YOU TAKE IT FROM ME I'LL RUN YOU THROUGH WITH YOUR OWN CUTLASS!



BOWER DREW THE MAN CONFRONTING HIM AND RACED INTO TOWN TO FIND HELP . . .

I'VE FOUND CAPTAIN KODD'S TREASURE AND I KILLED HIM WHEN HE TRIED TO STOP ME . . .

EASY, SON! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT WHEN YOU MENTION MURDER, THAT'S MY BUSINESS! LET'S GO!



WHICH BOWER AND THE SHERIFF REACHED THE FATAL SPOT . . .

THERE'S NO TRACE OF TREASURE HERE, SON! BUT HERE'S YOUR CORPSE! IT'S OLD BEN, THE BEACHCOMBER!

HE'S HIDDEN MY TREASURE! IT WAS HERE AN HOUR AGO! MY TREASURE IS GONE!



MATTHEW BOWER WAS SENT TO PRISON FOR LIFE FOR THE MURDER HE HAD COMMITTED HIS ONLY COMPANY FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE WAS A HANDFUL OF PIECES OF EIGHT THAT HE FORGED ENDLESSLY. THERE IS NO EXPLANATION AS TO WHERE HE HAD ACQUIRED THIS BIT OF PIRATE TREASURE!

TERROR IN THE COAL PITS

"I SHOULDN'T STOP! IT MIGHT BE ANOTHER ROBERT STUNTY! BUT I CAN'T JUST RUN HIM DOWN! AND THAT OTHER CAR—if he tries to jump out of my way in that direction . . .



AFTER TEN HOURS OF HARD DRIVING, THE EYES SOMETIMES PLAY TRICKS ON ME, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT. I WAS DRIVING IT UP THROUGH THE MOUNTAINOUS COAL MINING SECTION OF PENNSYLVANIA, NEARING THE END OF MY TRIP, WHEN SUDENLY, ALMOST OUT OF NOWHERE, A MAN STOOD PINNED IN THE CROSS-CROSS GLARE OF MY CAR AND ONE COMING FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION. HE WAS FRANTICALLY FLAILING HIS ARMS AT ME IN A STOP-SIGNAL AND I BEGAN TO PUMP THE BRAKES. THAT WAS HOW IT STARTED, THE MOST STRANGELY HAUNTING AND TERRIFYING NIGHT OF MY LIFE...

SUDDENLY, BEFORE MY HORROR—
STRAIGHT ON—THE MAN STEPPED TO
ONE SIDE, FULL INTO THE PATH OF THE
OTHER ON-COMING CAR! STRANGELY,
HE SEEMED COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF
THE DANGER, AND THOUGH BOTH SETS
OF HEADLIGHTS FOcUSED ON THE MAN
IN THE ROAD, THE OTHER DRIVER FAILED
TO SEE HIM, DIDN'T SLOW UP OR
BLACKEN SPEED, BUT CRASHED
STRAIGHT INTO HIM!



WHAT A HORRIBLE THING / STRANGE THOUGH, HE SEEMED TO DISAPPEAR AFTER THAT CAR STRUCK HIM, OR ELSE I WAS TEMPORARILY BLINDED BY THE HEADLIGHTS /



AS I GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND STARTED WALKING, I SAW AN AMAZING THING! THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN SO MURDEROUSLY RUN OVER WAS WALKING TOWARDS ME, APPARENTLY UNHURT!

I EXPECTED TO FIND YOU IN PIECES LYING IN THE DIRT, THE WAY THAT CAR PLAMMED YOU!



IT DIDN'T REALLY HIT ME! YOU CAN SEE, MISS JARVIS, I'M NOT HURT!

HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME? WHAT IS IMPORTANT, MISS JARVIS, IS THAT YOU STOPPED FOR ME, NOW, IF YOU'LL JUST FOLLOW ME TO THE MINE, QUICKLY, THE MINER NEEDS YOUR NURSING EXPERIENCE! THERE'S BEEN A BAD GATE IN!

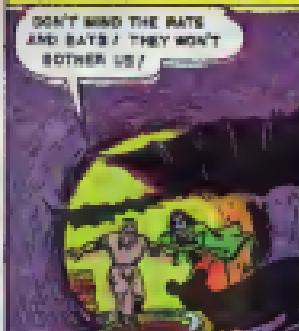


WE KNEW MY NAME AND THE FACT THAT I WAS A NURSE! I WAS AFRAID, BUT I NEVER DREAMED TO DESERT HIM. I FOUND MYSELF FOLLOWING HIM MEDDLE DOWN A DARK, LONGLY PATH . . .



HURRY! THE MINE SHFT IS ONLY A FEW HUNDRED FEET AHEAD!

A HORRIFYING ELEVATOR POURCHED UP TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT WHERE THE DEATHLY SILENCE WAS SO THICK YOU COULD FEEL IT PRESSING AROUND YOU. I WAS WEAK WITH FEAR, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW . . .



DON'T WIND THE RATE AND RATE! THEY WON'T BOTHER US /

TRUST MULE'S SKELETON — THE BIGGEST MULE'S BEEN DEAD FOR YEARS, AND THAT WRECKED COAL CAR IS COATED WITH RUST! HOW IS THAT?



Suddenly, as I followed him, out went the MINER'S HEAD-LAMP, BUT INSTEAD OF COMPLETE, ENDEAVORING SILENCE, I SAW . . .



YOU'RE ALL AWAY WITH BONE GREENISH, GHOSTLY LIGHT! WHAT IS IT?



I — UN — PROBABLY PHOSPHOROUS! LOT OF IT DOWN IN THESE MINES! AT LEAST YOU CAN STILL SEE TO FOLLOW ME!

IN A FEW MINUTES WE EMERGED FROM THE TUNNEL INTO CANTER-LORE PIT NUMBER FIVE.

TONNSEE, I BROUGHT
HER HERE SAFELY, MRS.
MARKO!

THANK GOODNESS!
COME OVER HERE, ROMA
JARVIS! HURRY! I FEEL
THAT MY TIME IS ALMOST
UP AND I HAVE IMPORTANT
THINGS TO TELL YOU!

THIS MAN WAS INTRODUCED TO ME AS ALVIN SHAW,
OWNER OF THE LUCKY MOLE REIRE, WHO HAD BEEN
ON AN INSPECTION TOUR WHEN HE GOT CAUGHT BY
THE CAVE-IN. AN ERGIC FEELING CRABBED OVER
ME AT REALIZATION THAT HE, TOO, KNEW MY NAME
AND SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN EXPECTING ME...

LUCKY THING I CARRIED A FIRST-AID KIT! FRESH
BANDAGES WILL MAKE YOU AND THE OTHERS A
LITTLE MORE COMFORTABLE.

DON'T

WASTE TOO MUCH
TIME ON US! IT WON'T
DO MUCH GOOD. I'VE GOT A
LETTER THAT YOU MUST
TAKE TO MY SON, WALTER!



THIS LETTER WILL TELL THE LUCKY
MOLE MAN, TO WALTER AND TELLS THE
LOCATION OF A BIG, RICH NEW VEIN OF
ARTHRODITE WE DISCOVERED JUST
BEFORE THE CAVE-IN! LEAVE NOW,
MISS JARVIS, BEFORE IT'S TOO
LATE! HURRY!

BUT I DON'T
UNDERSTAND! YOU MEN ARENT
REALLY TRAPPED IF I COULD...

AN UNHOLY RUMBLING ROLL FROM THE TUNNEL
LEADING TO THE ELEVATOR SHAFT INTERRUPTED
ME... FEARFUL OF BEING TRAPPED BY A NEW CAVE-IN
I STARTED BACK DOWN THE TUNNEL TOWARD THE
EXIT WITHOUT FURTHER QUESTIONS.



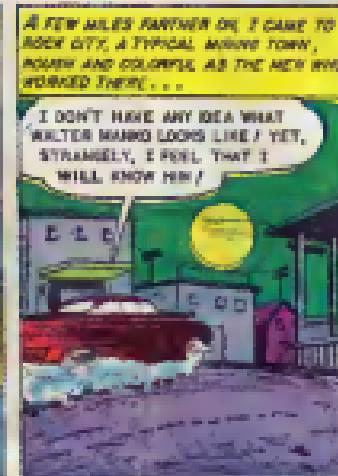
WHEN I CAME, THE TUNNEL WAS
IN PITCH BLACKNESS! NOW THERE
ARE TORCHES SO THAT I CAN SEE
MY WAY! BUT WHERE DID THEY
COME FROM? WHO PUT
THEM THERE?



THAT WAS JUST ANOTHER OF THE MANY
STRANGE AND AWESOME THINGS HAPPENING
THIS MORNING, TO WHICH THERE
SEEMED NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION. NOR
DO I HAVE MUCH TIME TO THINK ABOUT
IT. SUDDELY, AHEAD OF ME, JUST
BEFORE I REACHED THE ELEVATOR,

ANOTHER CAVE-IN! I'LL BE
TRAPPED, TOO! AND THERE'S GAS!
IT'LL SMOTHER ME, EVEN IF IT
DOESN'T KNOCK ME OUT!





WHAT WAS HE SURPRISED ALVIN MARSH
DIED FOR NEARLY THAT MINT CART-WHICH
HAPPENED THAT LONG AGO? THEN
HOW COULD I HAVE POSSIBLY TALKED
TO THOSE MEN TODAY?

BUT—BUT I SAW
MR. MARSH JUST
A LITTLE WHILE
AGO! HE...

I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOUR
AUNT IS, SISTER,
BUT GIVE ME
BACK THAT
SEED!

I TEND TO
BUST UP OUR
DEAL! ILL...

LEAVE HER
ALONE, CAMPO!
I WANT TO HEAR
HER STORY!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR
ME? MAYBE THIS
WILL OPEN YOUR
EARS!

UGH!

SOCK!



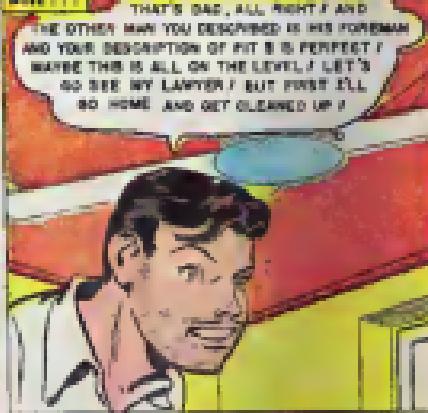
AFTER HE LEFT ME BACK TO HIS TABLE, WALTER SAID
TOLD ME THAT CAMPO HAD BEEN AFTER HIM FOR A
LONG TIME. THE LUCKY GUY ALREADY KNOWS WHO

TWO—LETTER FROM MY FATHER! IF IT ISN'T A SECRET, IT MEANS THAT HE
DISCOVERED A NEW WEIR THAT
MAKES THE MINE WORTH A
FORTUNE!

IT ISN'T
ANY MORE.
I CAN DESCRIBE
YOUR
FATHER!

WHEN I HAD FINISHED DESCRIBING THE MAN
WHO...

THAT'S DAD, ALL RIGHT! AND
THE OTHER MAN YOU DESCRIBED IS HIS FOREMAN
AND YOUR DESCRIPTION OF IT IS PERFECT!
MAYBE THIS IS ALL ON THE LEVELY. LET'S
GO SEE MY LAWYER! BUT FIRST I'LL
GO HOME AND GET CLEANED UP!

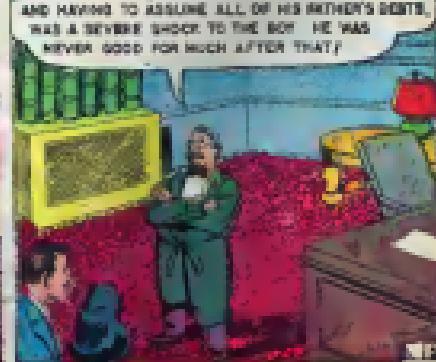


AT THE HOME OF COLIN ANDREWS, THE MARSH FAMILY'S
ATTORNEY, SOME OF ALVIN'S ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS WERE
USED TO COMPARE THE HANDWRITING OF THE WILL AND
LETTER THAT IT HAD BROUGHT TO WALTER.

THEY CHECK PERFECTLY,
WALTER! THIS LETTER IS
FROM YOUR FATHER, ALL
RIGHT! IT'S A STRANGE
THING, VERY STRANGE!

ESPECIALLY
UNDER THE CIRCUM-
STANCES! PERHAPS
YOU'D BETTER TELL
THEM TO MOHAN!

ALVIN MARSH WAS BANKRUPT, HIS MINE WROKE
OUT, AT THE TIME OF HIS—OH—DEATH! WALT AND
THIS FATHER HAD ALWAYS BEEN VERY CLOSE, AND
IN THE ACCIDENT, FINDING OUT HE WAS BROKE,
AND HAVING TO ASSUME ALL OF HIS MOTHER'S DEBTS,
WAS A SEVERE SHOCK TO THE BOY. HE WAS
NEVER GOOD FOR MUCH AFTER THAT!



BUT THAT'S ALL CHANGED NOW / MONA'S STORY GIVES ME NEW HOPE / IF YOU CAN ARRANGE FOR ME TO BORROW THE MONEY TO BLAST OPEN THE MINE, MAYBE WE CAN GET TO THE NEW YORK CITY DESCRIBED!



YOU FORGET, WALTER...DOZEN ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO GET TO THE TRAPPED MEN BUT THEY WERE TOO DEEP / THE GATE-IN WAS TOO HEAVY, AND WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHICH PIT THEY WERE IN / I'M AFRAID THAT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE!



WALTER MAILED TOLD ANDREW THAT AT MY DEMAND HE NOW KNEW WHICH PIT THE MEN WERE IN. HE AGREED AND FINALLY ANDREW AGREED TO GET THE MONEY TO RE-OPEN THE MINE LATER. BACK IN MY HOTEL, I TOSSED ONTO THE BED AND FELL INTO EXHAUSTED SLEEP. MY MIND FULL OF THE NIGHT'S DIZZY ADVENTURE...



I DON'T KNOW WHAT TIME IT WAS, HOW WHAT SHAKENED ME, BUT SUDDENLY DURING THE NIGHT I SAT UPRIGHT AND SAW WRITTEN IN BLOODY, HOLLOW LETTERS ON THE MIRROR...



BREATHLESS WITH FEAR, I FOUND COURAGE TO SET UP AND SNAP ON THE CAMERAS TO FIND...



THE NEXT MORNING, WALTER MAILED CALLED ME AND TOLD ME HE'D MADE ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRYING TO RE-OPEN THE MINE. I WENT OUT THERE WITH HIM...



IM AFRAID IT'S NO USE, MORALY THEY'VE BEEN WORKING ALL MORNING, BUT CAN'T GET THROUGH / PIT FIVE IS COMPLETELY BLOCKED OFF BY TONS OF ROCK AND DIRT /



THAT HANDWRITING ON THE MIRROR / I WONDER...

WALT! TRY TO BREAK THROUGH FROM TUNNEL TEN!

WALT MAHMO REMEMBERED THAT FATHER TOOK DAD BACK UP AGAINST MIDNIGHT. HE HURRIED THERE, AND THE MEN IMMEDIATELY WENT TO WORK. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS...

THERE'S A LOT OF SAND AND LOOSE SHALE, EASY TO CHISEL THROUGH! THEY'RE LIKELY TO BREAK THROUGH ANY MINUTE!



HENRY, MR. MAHMO, LOOK AT THESE! LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN TUNNEL SEVEN!

WHAT IS IT, STEVENS?



A LADY'S SHOE AND PURSE? HOW COULD THEY GET IN HERE?

I-UM-DON'T KNOW, STEVENS! JUST FORGET ABOUT IT! I'LL TAKE THOSE THINGS!



A LITTLE LATER, THE NEW WIDOW OF COAL WAS LOCATED AS WALTER'S DEAD FATHER HAD DESCRIBED IT...

BY THE LOOKS OF THIS, THE LUCKY MULE WILL BE KEPT GOING FULL FORCE FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS, AT LEAST! THAT SLICKER, CAMBO, MUST HAVE FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS, SOME WAY. THAT'S WHY HE WAS SO ANXIOUS TO BUY THE MINE FROM ME, CHEAP!



THIRTY MINUTES LATER, THE BREAK-THROUGH WAS MADE. WALTER AND I CLAMBERED INSIDE. EVERYTHING WAS THE SAME AS IT HAD BEEN THE NIGHT BEFORE, OR AT FIVE, EXCEPT THAT THE MAN WHO'D BEEN AND DIED TO WORK SKELETONS, TEN FEET DEAD!

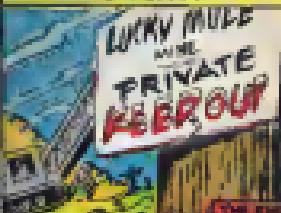
I—I FINALLY GOT TO YOU, DAD, THANKS TO MELBA! AND DAD—YOU'RE GOING TO BE PROUD OF ME. FROM NOW ON I'LL FIND THAT NEW YORK AND THE LUCKY MULE WILL ONCE AGAIN BE GOING FULL BLAST!

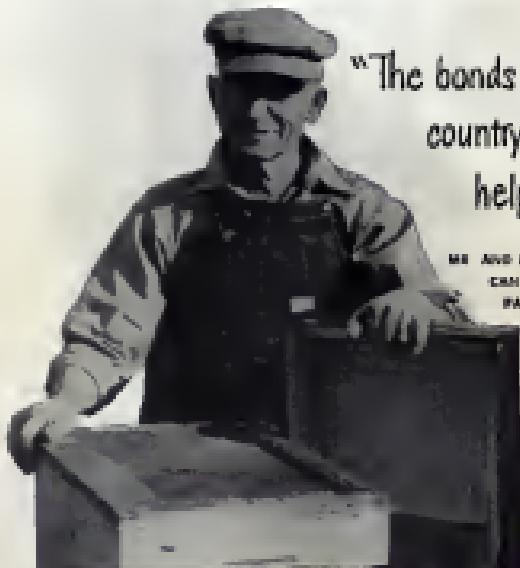


A STRANGE SENSE OF RELIEF BURNED THROUGH ME AS I SAID THAT WE HAD FOUND MY SHOE AND PURSE, LOST IN THE DARK THE NIGHT BEFORE! I KNEW NOW THAT NONE OF THIS WAS JUST COINCIDENCE. THAT EVEN THOUGH THE TIME ELEMENT WAS OFF, ALL THOSE STRANGE THINGS HAD HAPPENED. IT HAD BEEN HERE LAST NIGHT AND YET, HOW COULD ANYONE EXPLAIN THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS?



WALTER MAHMO AND I ARE MARRIED NOW. THE LUCKY MULE MINE PROSPERS. WE NEVER DISCUSS THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF THAT STRANGE NIGHT I SPENT IN THE COAL PIT. "BETTER TO FORGET IT," WALTER TOLD ME. "THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ARE BETTER LEFT UNFORGOTTEN. SOME PEOPLE WOULD CALL YOU INSANE!" SO I TRY TO FORGET IT... BUT SOMETIMES...





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